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EPA AWARDS $405,000 TO COMMUNITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY
TO SUPPORT BROWNFIELDS REVITALIZATION AND SMART GROWTH

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U. S. EPA Deputy Administrator Linda Fisher today announced $405,000 in grants to nine communities around the country under the "Smart Growth: Saving Open Space, Revitalizing Brownfields" program. Each community will receive $45,000 to incorporate smart growth approaches into the redevelopment of properties where reuse is complicated by real or perceived contamination.

Commenting on the announcement, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman said: "With hundreds of thousands of Brownfields needing attention across the country, it is clear that we must choose areas with real redevelopment potential. These communities have demonstrated a readiness to make the most of their redevelopments by embracing a smart growth approach."

"These nine award winners will pave the way for other communities by demonstrating the environmental and economic benefits that can be gained by incorporating smart growth into their Brownfields revitalization efforts. All of you will continue to provide examples of creative, innovative approaches to dealing with the difficult challenges you face in converting your local eyesores into community assets," said Deputy Administrator Fisher, who announced the grants in a speech today in Washington to the Brownfields Showcase Community Summit.

This grant program supports EPA's existing Brownfields program by highlighting innovative approaches to Brownfield redevelopment that clearly integrate smart growth principles. Recipients include: Mystic Valley Development Corp., Massachusetts; Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management; Baltimore Development Corp.; Des Moines, Iowa; Trenton N.J.; St. Louis Development Corp., Missouri and Illinois; Kansas City, Kan. and Mo.; Chicago; and Portland, Ore.

Activities that will be funded under the grant program include: a "Smart Sites" program to identify and market available Brownfields sites and incentives to potential redevelopers; site plans for the redevelopment of critical Brownfields sites that demonstrate smart growth features, such as a mix of uses and transportation choices; capacity-building for local officials and builders on how to redevelop suburban commercial centers using smart growth techniques; mathematical models to evaluate the impacts of smart growth redevelopment of Brownfields; and regional approaches that connect urban Brownfields reuse with suburban and rural open space preservation. Many of these activities will be replicable in other communities.

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Earlier this year, President Bush signed bipartisan legislation to encourage the cleanup and redevelopment of Brownfields. Use of smart growth principles in Brownfield redevelopments can increase the net benefits associated with reusing sites already serviced by infrastructure, reduce demand for land for development on the urban fringe, and improve the air and water quality of the regions in which they are applied. Smart growth creates healthy communities and neighborhoods and a strong economy by moving the development debate away from the question of whether new growth should occur to how and where it can be accommodated.

EPA's "Smart Growth: Saving Open Space, Revitalizing Brownfields" grant program is an important component of EPA Administrator Whitman's "Open Space Preservation Strategies for Promoting Smarter Growth and Environmental Preservation" initiative. Announced Jan. 24, 2002, this initiative recognizes the critical importance of linking open space preservation and Brownfield redevelopment through a smart growth approach to achieve better environmental protection. In addition to the grants, the initiative provides technical assistance to states and communities to prioritize open space for preservation.

For more information about the grant program and awardees, or the Administrator's initiative, go to http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/brownfields.htm

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